

COLLABORATION CARING INTEGRITY

We hear and value multiple perspectives · We are comfortable being uncomfortable · We act responsibly. We are accountable for our actions · We give our most · We reflect on our vision mission values

Palouse Prairie Educational Organization
Doing business as
Palouse Prairie School of Expeditionary Learning
Business Meeting

May 23, 2013

Location: Palouse Prairie School Building, 1500 Levick St, Moscow ID

Meeting called to order at _7:08_.

Attending: **Joseph Erhard-Hudson (J E-H), Brian Gardner (BG), Nils Peterson (NP), Della Bayly (DB), Anthony Warn (AW)**

Absent:

Public: **Jessica Bearman, Rebekka Boysen-Taylor, Terri Summers, Nina Staszko, Jacob Ellsworth, Jessie Dahlin, Greg Miller-Pierce, Greg Larson, Debbie Berkana**

Note Taker:

1. Welcome to public audience and guests (5 min)

We welcome our guests to this evening's Palouse Prairie School board meeting. The meeting is public and has a structure to meet the legal requirements on public governing boards. At the same time we strive to have the meeting reflect the values of Palouse Prairie School. Our vision is for an inclusive, respectful and supportive learning environment. The goal for this meeting is to meet our vision, our legal requirements, and our practical need to accomplish business in an efficient manner.

Board Members will now introduce themselves.

Now, we would like to welcome members of the audience. Further in the agenda is a place for comment from the public within this board meeting. Please say your name, if you wish, so we may know who is presenting.

2. Approval of agenda

NP moved, DB 2nd; unanimous

3. Presentations & Reports

3.1 Report from ICSN Programmatic Audit

Generally very positive oral report. Postive comments on how much space we have. Good input on front office operations timely suggestion for how to better organize files.

3.2 Fundraising campaign update

Generally moving to a stage of soliciting in the community by writing letters. Sign out front is current and shows cash in hand and pledges. \$1300 raised at the Gallery Walk/Graduation event.

3.3 Strategic Plan update

Jessica Bearman presented the draft report (attached). Seeking feedback. Multiple means for people to give feedback. Next step is to share out what emerged and ground-truth it. Goal is high-level priorities for the next 3-5 years. Four major themes arose. Plan has some specific details under the 4 themes. Next steps over the summer and into the fall. Opportunity to clarify ideas like "rigor." Confirm more of the details, add timeline. Move toward implementation. Ideal timeline would be by end of summer for an operational plan.

3.4 Board recruitment update

Commitments from three people to join. Sarah Deming, Todd Broadman, Greg Larson. Maybe: Amy Ball, Donna Mills

3.5 UI Visiting Clinical Professorship

Chair of UI Curriculum & Instruction approached AW with an idea to create a visiting clinical faculty position for a one-year term for Jacob Ellsworth.

4. Announcements

- 4.1 Idaho School Board Assn. Leadership Institute, June 18 2013, Coeur d'Alene Idaho. http://www.idsba.org/sites/default/files/SLI_Flyer.pdf
BG and Greg Larson are interested in attending. DB maybe. Institute is a 1-day boot camp for Board members. Early registration \$120/person by May 28.

5. Approval of minutes

5.1 Approve minutes from April 25, 2013

<https://docs.google.com/a/palouseprairieschool.org/document/d/1wry1vMYu77-5L8gQNo1JhL3v-V9vnmU0RRcp0Ghhh0I/edit>

BG moved. DB 2nd; unanimous

5.2 Approve minutes from May 9, 2013

<https://docs.google.com/a/palouseprairieschool.org/document/d/1RoCCOOCmAx3QwP-wtg99WqcABTbg-IIDk5TtMG5a3YM/edit>

NP moved; BG 2nd; DB abstain; motion carried

6. Public Comment Period (limit 15 minutes)

At this point in the agenda, members of the public are welcome to come forward, identify themselves (name and address) and speak on any topic relevant to Palouse Prairie School and not on the agenda of this meeting. The time allotted for a speaker is three minutes. The Board will refrain from responding beyond asking for a clarification. The comments presented at this time will be reviewed by the Board.

Greg Larson noted that the Gallery Walk/Graduation was moving and enjoyable. Encouraged strategic planning to act soon while there is still momentum

7. Action Items

7.1 Consent Agenda

Any member can ask to have an item removed from the Consent Agenda and considered as part of the regular meeting. These alterations to the agenda will happen at this point in the meeting. Removed items will be addressed immediately after the Consent Agenda. Consent Agenda items are not discussed and will be addressed as a single motion.

7.1.A. Accept April 2013 Financial Reports

BG moved, DB 2nd; unanimous

7.2 Appoint new members to Board

Appoint Todd Broadman and Greg Larson to fill 3-year terms beginning in July 2013

NP moved; DB 2nd, unanimous

7.3 Approve 2013-14 School Calendar

NP moved to table for special meeting on May 30. BG 2nd; unanimous

7.4 Formation of Advisory Board

NP moved to table for special meeting on May 30 DB 2nd. unanimous

7.5 Charter & Bylaw revisions

No action. NP charged with submitting materials to the Commission

7.6 Series 5000 Policies

No action. Goal remains to adopt 5000 series June 20

8. Workshops

8.1 First Hearing, 2013-14 Budget

Analysis of the 8 pieces of guidance from April 24

1. EL contract, travel and sub-days are a good effort toward a robust implementation. Question about low level of expedition funds.

2. Ratio instruction/admin. moving the right way, following auditor

3. Deficit not moving in right direction

4. Facility spending plan needs to be addressed

5. Increased salaries are in the budget and are hoped to aid

retention

6. Art program, combined with CLL has a placeholder in the budget

7. Pay off loan - there is evidence that fund balance but might be large enough for early payment to be feasible while staying above the Auditor's recommended fund balance minimum. This would capture the value of monthly payments avoided to help with 3 &/or 4.

8 Americorp position (2nd one being sought) could address CLL

9. Executive Session

9.1 Discussion of contract renewals and procedures and executive compensation

The Board reviewed the proposal to offer 2-year contracts; the concept of a letter of intent to offer a contract (to alert teachers to Board intention in advance of the very late budget and contract signing date (June 20)) and the level of executive compensation as it appeared in the draft budget. No actions were taken.

Meeting adjourned at 11:15.

2012-2013 Board of Directors

Nils Peterson, Secretary; term expires 2013

Joseph Erhard-Hudson, Chair; term expires 2013

Brian Gardner, Vice Chair and Treasurer; term expires 2014

Della Bayly, term expires 2014

Vacant: term expires 2015

Palouse Prairie School Strategic Planning Team Report School Priorities

After four years of start-up and growth, Palouse Prairie School's board of directors decided that it would be useful to develop a strategic plan, focusing on priorities for the next three-five years of the school's operation.

The following process was used to arrive at the priorities below:

- A strategic planning team formed this winter, including a board representative and seven parent volunteers.
- After conversation with the Palouse Prairie School board, the group developed a multi-pronged approach to seeking stakeholder input on a vision and priorities for the school. Feedback gathering included:
 - Anonymous online survey sent to all stakeholders and completed by parents, students, and staff (28 responses)
 - "Vision Box" in the front office for hard copy surveys and other notes
 - Open invitation to email feedback, sent to all parents
 - Evening visioning forum (Called Post-its and Popcorn) with childcare (attended by 40 parents)
 - Meeting with PPS teachers during staff meeting
- The plan received input from about 80 school stakeholders. (note that due to the survey's anonymity, there may be some untracked overlap between those who responded to the survey online and those who came to the visioning forum).

- All feedback was reviewed and distilled by the strategic planning team into the brief document that follows.
- Our next steps are to share our summary and raw data with PPS board and community for feedback and begin to develop a final set of recommended three to five year priorities for the school.

Themes:

Stakeholders have a notable passion and energy for Palouse Prairie School. Parents and teachers alike spoke glowingly about the school’s distinctive educational model and culture. In almost every case, the authentic, interdisciplinary, hands-on learning of the EL model and the close-knit, character-focused culture of the school drew parents to enroll their children in the school instead of the other Moscow elementary schools. **In the next three years, maintaining and strengthening those special components of the school will be essential, if Palouse Prairie School is to remain a distinctively different and appealing option for parents and teachers.**

Feedback from stakeholders fell into the following broad themes:

- 1. EL Culture and Principles: Nurture the school’s emphasis on CREW culture, EL principles, and the distinctive EL pedagogy.**
- 2. Systems: Cement and codify critical systems, including volunteer management, family involvement, fundraising, and operations.**
- 3. Highest quality teachers: Focus on teacher well-being, including compensation, support, professional development, and work environment.**
- 4. Facilities: Stakeholders want a green, safe facility and grounds, realizing however that a new location and building may not be realistic at this time.**

Additional Detail:

<p>1. EL Culture and Principles: Nurture the school’s emphasis on CREW culture, EL</p>		
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<p>principles, and the distinctive EL pedagogy.</p>		
<p>Priority</p>	<p>Includes specifics such as</p>	<p>Notes</p>
<p>a) School CREW Culture</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community Circle (weekly gathering) or other mechanism for reinforcing school values across the school. - Extending CREW outside school, with additional community connections - Establish school traditions - Emphasis on wellness (food, health) - Continued encouragement and facilitation of interaction between different student age groups and continued evaluation of the pedagogical and practical value of multi-grade classrooms. 	<p>School culture was identified as a strong bedrock of the school and also something that was felt to be in danger of dissipating.</p>
<p>b) Exemplify EL Learning Model</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Purchase full EL contract and ensure that all teachers and administration are fully trained and invested in EL model. - School to exemplify EL w/ in five years 	<p>The EL teaching model of PPS is part of the bedrock and is felt to be in danger, due to lack of experience and funds.</p>
<p>c) Rigor</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clarify a definition of “rigor” and establish expectations for the school’s performance (does PPS want to perform as well as other Moscow schools on tests? Better? Do we not care?) - Math and science instruction enhanced - Tie to EL – they are 	<p>Considerable feedback pointed to concerns about math and science instruction and performance, and a desire for renewed focus on them and communication about them going forward. A perception of lack of rigor may cost the school students in the future.</p>

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<p>2. Systems: Cement and codify critical systems, including volunteer management, family involvement, fundraising, and operations.</p>		
<p>Theme</p>	<p>Includes specifics such as</p>	<p>Notes</p>
<p>d) Funding Plan in Place/ Fundraising Culture</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need a secure funding base and trajectory - Continue to establish a culture of fundraising/ contribution - Transparency: disclosure of school's financial realities - Well-managed systems for tracking, acknowledging and seeking donations. - Coordinated grantseeking - Designated fundraiser 	<p>The comments received about fundraising displayed some degree of magical thinking (we wish there were a giant grant.. we wish that Apple would adopt our school). However, the anxiety is palpable. PPS must have a strong and consistent annual fundraising plan in place within the next year.</p>
<p>e) Family Involvement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communication to families increased and families given more notice of opportunities. - Expectation of volunteerism clearly communicated along with well-organized opportunities. - System for recruiting, communicating with, managing, and acknowledging volunteers 	<p>Many families are involved with PPS, but it's felt that more is needed. Feedback recommended that an invitation to volunteer (and expectation) be more explicit and also that volunteers be better managed.</p>
<p>f) Mature Governance and Systems</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Board fully "staffed" - Front office fully staffed - Systems for fundraising, volunteer management, etc. in place 	<p>Stability at the board level and in the front office provide a sense of security to parents and staff.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - School in compliance for special education students. 	
<p>g) Consistent and high-quality communication</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regular newsletter (older students could assist in newsletter development) - Advance notice of upcoming events - Substantive news from school director - Information about testing, standards, and school performance - Transparency around school's financial and academic status. 	<p>Consistent written communication with parents will help them feel more like CREW</p>

<p>3. Highest quality teachers: Focus on teacher well-being, including compensation, support, professional development, and work environment.</p>		
<p>Priorities</p>	<p>Includes specifics such as</p>	<p>Notes</p>
<p>h) Teachers have sufficient pay and work environment quality.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teachers fairly compensated: \$ and quality of work environment 	<p>Feedback showed great respect and appreciation for PPS's wonderful teaching staff and a strong desire that they be fully trained and supported. Some comments indicated that further turnover of teachers would prompt a loss of confidence in the school.</p>
<p>i) Supported teachers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High quality office and administrative support needed - Teachers supported by 	<p>The school's lack of specialists means very little planning time during work hours for teachers. In the</p>

	<p>sufficient specialists (PE, music, art)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teachers supported by sufficient classroom and school volunteers. - Teachers fully trained and proficient in EL - Teachers as CREW role models 	<p>past, CLL has provided some additional planning time, and some stakeholders would like to reconsider it, or a program with a similar set of goals.</p>
<p>j) Instructional Support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teachers have a defined scope and sequence. - Additional planning time for teachers needed – CLL or CLL-like program. - Curriculum map for student progress through their entire PPSEL career 	<p>Teachers expressed the need to better map out what is taught, so that they aren't reinventing the wheel every year.</p>

<p>4. Facilities: Stakeholders want a green, safe facility and grounds, realizing however that a new location and building may not be realistic at this time.</p>		
<p>Priorities</p>	<p>Includes specifics such as</p>	<p>Notes</p>
<p>k) Green and Safe Facilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New building and outside space (long term) - Safety in current building/ location - All aspects of facility to code. - Improve facilities inside: library, science lab, electrical systems, ceiling tiles, etc. 	<p>There were many comments about the need for a new building and outside space. While stakeholders seem to understand the constraints, it would be helpful to have an explicit plan in place for moving in this direction.</p> <p>In addition, while in the current space, all felt strongly</p>

		that effort should continue to ensure that it is as safe and pleasant as possible.
I) Safety protocols and plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continued and increased attention to safety outside school building (highway) - Better tracking of kids and their whereabouts - Ensure all visitors are admitted through the front office - Emergency plans 	Parents and teachers wanted to be sure that the school has effective systems and plans in place to ensure student safety.

Areas of differing opinions:

Not surprisingly, this process surfaced several areas where the school community is of two (or many) minds. In many cases, the tensions identified are not really ideas in opposition and could be resolved with better communication and discussion:

- G&T? While some parents wanted additional services for high-performing students (G&T program, for example), others felt strongly that any sort of pull-out program would be detrimental to the school, and that differentiation could and should happen within the classroom.
- More vs. Less Technology. While some felt that the school needed to increase its use of technology, others felt that this would be a distraction from learning.
- “Rigor” vs. Expeditionary Learning: There may also be different definitions for what constitutes “rigor” so a school-wide exploration of this topic would be helpful. Many parents want increased stringency and higher expectations, especially in math and science, but others are concerned that a focus on testing will detract from the expeditionary learning model.
- Expectation of financial/volunteer contribution vs. public school realities. Because state funding for PPS isn’t sufficient, everyone is eager to find avenues for additional money and volunteer support. Contributions of parents are an obvious target, but some were concerned that this type of expectation would run counter to the tenets of public education and create uncomfortable situations for those without discretionary money to donate.

Questions for PPS Board Consideration:

1. Do these themes resonate as the right priorities for the school? What's missing?
2. Does the overview need any additional context or detail (*or less detail) before it is shared with parent and teacher stakeholders?
3. How will you go from this set of high level priorities to a detailed operational plan for the next year to three years of the school?

RAW Data can be found here:

All information from Forum

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/ccc?key=0Apl3VrKPc6KldF8xV0RYU1dBX09TUnJGZjFIYjE4V0E&usp=sharing>

Survey data: http://www.surveymonkey.com/sr.aspx?sm=GlybJnhEJrNiPbN5yFRkyPfkPUk8ta0P6tBhGCGeWU_3d

Password: palouseprairie

Results shared in aggregate only

Teacher meeting brainstorm: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/18TZCcMP-nlftIK67b2NwA9pIVPWwHJca-ZfHxUMKzl/edit?usp=sharing>

4.